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USAID FOR DCHA/AA, DCHA/FFP, DCHA/OTI, DCHA/CMM

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREF](#) [WFP](#) [GH](#) [PHUM](#) [SENV](#)
SUBJECT: DISASTER DECLARATION GHANA FLOOD DISASTER

¶1. This is an action request. Please see paragraph 9.

¶2. Pursuant to section 062, volume 2 of the Foreign Affairs Manual and USAID ADS 251, the Charge d'Affaires has determined that a disaster exists in Ghana and certifies that the following conditions exist: over the past few months high levels of rainfall have inundated the Upper East, Northern, and Upper West Regions of Ghana. The incessant rains and flooding have resulted in collapsed homes, washed away bridges and roads, and immediate and short-term food insecurity of affected populations. The flooding has been exacerbated by the opening of both spillways of the Bagre and Kompienga Dams in Burkina Faso between September 4 and 22, releasing significant water flows into the White Volta River, which flows into Ghana. Also affected is the Oti River catchment area covering parts of the Bunkpurugu-Yunyoo district.

¶3. The GOG's initial assessment on September 9th and 10th was followed by a rapid UN Joint assessment on September 17th and 18th in some parts of the Northern Region confirming that over 130,000 people have been affected by floods in three northern regions of Ghana. According to a weekly situation report released by the United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs on September 25, 2009, over 659 communities in Upper East, Northern Region, and Upper West Regions have been affected by the flood with at least 24 communities inaccessible from the rest of

the country. Over 6,352 houses and 13 school buildings have collapsed with over 38,000 acres of farm lands destroyed. Many displaced persons are living in school buildings and churches with surviving animals; boreholes and hand-dug wells have been contaminated by the floods. So far 8 deaths have occurred as the victims were swept away by raging waters in their attempt to salvage farm and household effects. It is evident from initial reports by the GOG and members of the UN and NGO consortium that this flood disaster is of a magnitude beyond government's capacity to adequately respond; hence, the call by the National Disaster Management Organization on September 28 for assistance to alleviate the "excessive" human suffering. The Northern Regional Minister has already issued a press release calling for humanitarian assistance to affected persons.

¶4. The Government of Ghana through the Regional Coordinating Council, is leading a weekly humanitarian assessment meeting in Tamale. In addition, a monthly Inter-Agency Working Group has been activated to coordinate and assess the situation. In attendance will be USAID, other UN agencies (WFP, UNICEF and others) resident in Accra as well as representatives from UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) and Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), DFID, ECHO, non-government organizations, private sector, religious bodies and media. A detailed assessment is yet to be conducted to determine the extent of damage in the affected regions.

¶5. At the September 23 monthly Inter-Agency Working Group meeting for NGOs, Development Partners and others hosted at the UN offices in Accra, it was reiterated that stakeholders should not replicate the efforts already being taken at the regional level meetings.

¶6. Over the weekend of September 26-27, a rapid assessment team from the Government of Ghana corroborated the seriousness of the effects of the floods. With stretches of farmland submerged in water, the food security situation is likely to worsen and already partners are being requested to support efforts at alleviating immediate food scarcities and imminent health hazards such as outbreaks of dysentery and malaria. Opportunities Industrialization Centers International (OICI) has also received requests from their local collaborators and partners for urgent food items like rice, cereals, millet, vegetable oil, cowpeas and non-food items including mosquito nets, household utensils, medicines, as well as the means of transporting the emergency assistance. OICI has submitted a proposal to USAID.

¶7. Gaps remaining for non-food items and other necessities will become clearer after the next regional Humanitarian Response meeting in Tamale in the coming week.

¶8. Responding to this disaster is in the interest of the U.S. Government because of humanitarian concerns and the importance of demonstrating that Ghana's friends stand ready to help. While the GoG is taking a proactive approach in guiding the relief effort and coordinating with international humanitarian assistance partners, there is limited GOG capacity to respond to the immediate disaster at hand, and thus, the GOG has appealed for international assistance. The GOG is very willing to accept USG assistance.

¶9. In light of these conditions, the U. S. Charge d'Affaires is requesting an immediate contribution of 50,000 USD from OFDA to OICI and RTI to implement an emergency response program. The U.S. Mission

Disaster Relief Officer and OFDA Regional Office have coordinated their efforts and support provision of non-food items to victims in the Northern Region living in temporary homes and to families assisting them. OICI and RTI will use this amount to provide non-food items to 5,000 victims in the Kpandai and West Mamprusi Districts of the Northern Region, the most heavily affected area of the flood disaster. The items will include cooking utensils, blankets and insecticide treated bed nets. In addition to the above response, USAID through the President's Malaria Initiative will provide 10,000 courses of anti-malarial medications to the Northern Region to supplement the depleted supplies of public health facilities in flood-affected districts. Following these responses, there will be an assessment and additional assistance may be required.

¶10. Please review and confirm concurrence with the Charge d'Affaires' declaration and provide guidance on an appropriate obligation process as soon as possible.

FURUTA-TOY#